My Confession, Step by Step

Jesus is waiting to forgive you. Here is what to do.

1 Get ready

Pray: "Holy Spirit, help me remember my sins and be sorry." Think about the Ten Commandments.

2 Go in

Kneel behind the screen or sit face to face with the priest. Make the Sign of the Cross.

3 Begin

Say: "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession." (Later: "It has been ___ since my last confession.")

4 Tell your sins

Say what you did wrong, simply and honestly. Then say: "I am sorry for these and all my sins."

5 Listen

The priest talks with you and gives you a penance: a prayer to say or a kind thing to do.

6 Say sorry to God

Pray the Act of Contrition (on the next page). If you forget, the priest will help you.

7 Be forgiven

The priest says the words of absolution. Make the Sign of the Cross. Your sins are gone!

8 Say thank you

Do your penance soon. Thank Jesus for His mercy. Heaven is rejoicing!

"There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:7)

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The Act of Contrition

Learn it by heart. Trace over it, say it, pray it.

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

Your parish may teach a different version of the Act of Contrition. Any approved version is fine.

A short prayer from the heart: "Jesus, I am sorry for my sins. Help me to do better. Amen."

- - - Cut out these pocket cards and take them to Confession - - -

My Confession Card

- Sign of the Cross
- "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession."
- Tell my sins
- "I am sorry for these and all my sins."
- Listen and get my penance
- Act of Contrition
- Absolution: Sign of the Cross
- "Thank you, Father!"
- Do my penance

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

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